

Department of Environmental Quality Community Meeting and Notice of  
Public Comment Period: Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Middle  
Fork Holston River and Tributaries

**Thursday, December 2, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Board of Visitors Room in Van Dyke Center at Emory & Henry College (30461 Garnand Drive, Emory, VA)**

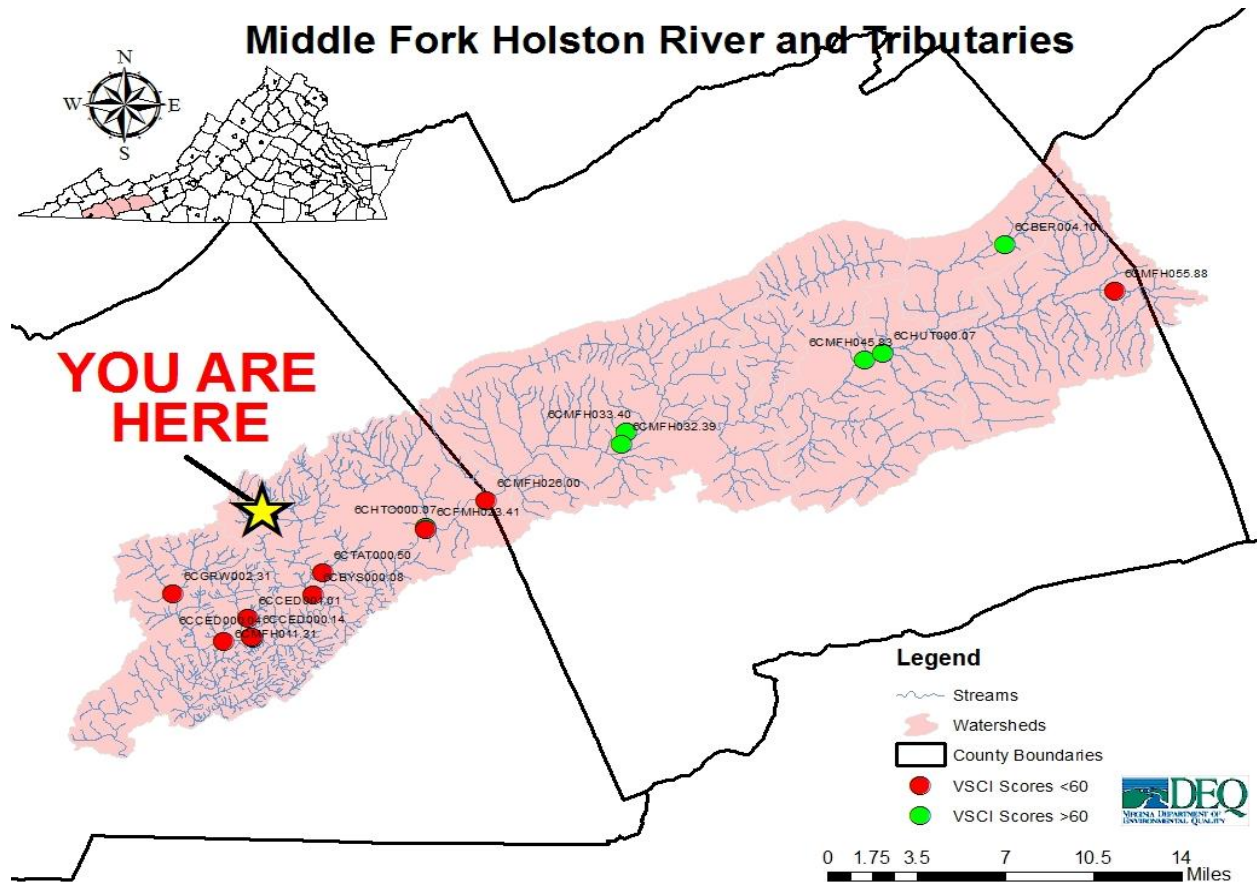
The SWRO and Emory & Henry College hosted the kick-off meeting for the Middle Fork Holston River and Tributaries TMDL on Thursday, December 2. This TMDL updates and revises two previously completed TMDLs. *TMDL Development for Cedar Creek, Hall/Byers Creek, and Hutton Creek* was completed in December of 2003 and *Bacteria and Benthic TMDL Development for Middle Fork Holston River* was completed in October 2009. The TMDL will address the benthic impairment and adjust for future growth. The public comment period started on December 2 and will end on January 3.

**Attendees:**

Dr. Robert Brent, James Madison University  
Katie Shoemaker, Wetland Studies  
Nathan Staley, Wetland Studies  
Dr. Laura Hainsworth, Emory and Henry College  
Stephanie Kreps, DEQ  
Kelly Miller, DEQ  
David Nichols, DEQ

David Nichols, DEQ TMDL Coordinator, started the meeting with introductions and then provided a presentation. General water quality basics were discussed including Virginia's water quality standards and the monitoring and assessment of Virginia's surface waters. General discussions on TMDLs and why and how they are developed proceeded discussions on benthic impairments and benthic TMDLs. David presented on the importance of macroinvertebrates in stream systems and how they are used to help determine water quality and their role in calculating the Virginia Stream Condition Index (VSCI).

David then went into the history of the Middle Fork Holston River watershed and discussed the previous TMDLs that were completed. Maps were provided of the Middle Fork Holston watershed and also the benthic stations that were sampled. These stations were used to highlight favorable VSCI scores (>60) and those stations with impaired scores (<60).



The impaired segments include:

- Byers/Hall Creek - Indian Run to Middle Fork Holston (VAS-O05R\_ BYS01A94) and headwaters to Byers Creek (VAS-O05R\_ HAL01A94),
- Cedar Creek - Confluence of East and West Fork Cedar Creek to MF Holston (VAS-O05R\_ CED01A94),
- Greenway Creek – headwaters to Middle Fork Holston (VAS-O05R\_ GRW01A02),
- Tattle Branch – headwaters to Byers Creek (VAS-O05R\_ TAT01A02).
- Mainstem Middle Fork Holston segments:
  - headwaters to the confluence with Dutton Branch (VAS-O03R\_ MFH05A04),
  - from Sulphur Spring Creek to Rt. 91 bridge (VAS-O05R\_ MFH04A00),
  - the segment Rt. 91 bridge to Edmondson Dam (VAS-O05R\_ MFH05A04).

These segments have been placed on Virginia's impaired waters list for failing to support the aquatic life use. The general water quality standard is intended to protect the aquatic life designated use, which states that all of the Commonwealth's waterways will support a diverse and abundant population of aquatic life. This study will include an updated benthic stressor analysis to evaluate the most likely pollutant(s) responsible for the impairments.

David then discussed the role of the Technical Advisory Committee and how to get involved. An advisory committee to assist in development of this TMDL will be established. Persons interested in assisting should notify David Nichols ([david.nichols@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:david.nichols@deq.virginia.gov)) by the end

## PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

of the comment period and provide their name, address, phone number, email address and the organization they represent (if any). Notification of the composition of the panel will be sent to all applicants.

Draft timeline for future meetings and development of the final TMDL:

- First public meeting – December 2, 2021
- First TAC meeting – March 2022
- Second TAC meeting – May 2022
- Final Public meeting – July 2022

Following the presentation there were discussions on the existing implementation plans and previous efforts to reduce sediment inputs. Implementation Plans exist for the Middle Fork Holston River (*A Plan to Reduce Fecal Bacteria and Sediment in the Middle Fork Holston River and Wolf Creek Watersheds* – 2013 and *A Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plan For Fecal Coliform Reductions Cedar Creek, Hall Creek, Byers Creek, and Hutton Creek Watersheds* – 2001).

Attendees were reminded that the real impetus behind this TMDL update is the need to make adjustments to the TMDL model to allow for future growth. The existing modelling files for the completed TMDLs have become obsolete and inaccessible. A new stressor analysis is also being completed utilizing the most up-to-date data available.

Attendees also discussed the metrics that are involved in calculating the VSCI scores (EPT taxa, Total taxa, % Ephemeroptera, % Plecoptera plus Trichoptera less Hydropsychidae, % Chironomidae, % Top 2 Dominant Taxa, HBI (Family biotic index), and % Scrapers).

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**HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE:** All meetings in support of TMDL development are open to the public and all interested parties are welcome. Written comments will be accepted from December 2, 2021 through January 3, 2022 and should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person submitting the comments. For more information, or to submit written comments, please contact:

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